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CLASSIFICATION ~~SECRET~~ SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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CD NO.

COUNTRY West Germany/East Germany/Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 4 May 1953

SUBJECT Clearance of Czechoslovak River Craft Operating between Hamburg and Czechoslovakia

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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO. (b)(1) (b)(3)

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1. Rivercraft of the Czechoslovak Elbe-Oder Navigation Company (Ceskoslovenska plavba labsko-oderska, narodni podnik)(CSPLO) are not subject to any supervision by customs authorities while loading or unloading within the area of the Free Port in Hamburg. They are, however, under the jurisdiction of the local CSPLO agency, which receives freight reports from the captain or helmsman, makes out loading lists and checks on the freight book (nakladni knizka) of the vessel on her departure.

[redacted] 2. Vessels bound for Czechoslovakia undergo their first check after departure from the Free Port at the river kilometer 618 near Entenwärder (coordinates unk.). This check is performed by German customs authorities on both the freight book and the vessel itself, but concerns only that part of the vessel which has been reported as open. The freight space which contains goods loaded in the Free Port area is locked without inspection and provided with customs seals. The number of seals is entered in a special document called "Begleitschein" which has to be returned after the vessel's arrival in Czechoslovakia to the German customs authorities with a confirmation that all seals have been found undamaged. (b)(1) (b)(3)

3. A second checkpoint is located at river kilometer 476 near Schnackenburg (N54/ T 50) where the border between the German Federal Republic and the Soviet Zone of Germany crosses the Elbe River. Checks are made by the German Federal Republic and British authorities on one, and the Soviet Zone and Russian authorities on the other side, on the crew's sailing books (plavecka knizka), the open part of the vessel, and the seals of the freight area.

4. The third and last check is made by Soviet Zone and Russian authorities on one, and Czechoslovak authorities on the other side, at Schnilka (N51/ F 57), East Germany, and Hrensko (N51/ F 57), Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovak check is made by customs officials on the seals of the freight space, the boiler and machine room, and the cabins and sailing books of the crew by SNB and StB officers who also

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(b)(3)

inspect cabins and print an entry stamp into the sailing books. These latter have to be turned in by the captain (or the helmsman) to the CSPLO authorities at Decin (N51/ L 56).* The captain is bound to report to the local CSPLO agencies at every halt.

5. Before unloading the whole or parts of the cargo, the captain must report to the customs office of the river port concerned to ask for removal of the seals. Customs patrols watch unloading and loading between 7 and 18 hours. Over night all freight space is sealed up. After unloading customs officials perform a check on the whole vessel to make sure that no part of the cargo has remained.

6. Vessels of the CSPLO bound for Hamburg are also loaded under assistance of customs officials as described above in paragraph 5. Prior to the vessel's departure the captain reports to the CSPLO office to get back the sailing books. The procedures to be undergone between the Czechoslovak border and Hamburg are analogous to those described in paragraphs 3 and 4. The seals on the entry to the freight space may not be removed before arrival in the Free Port of Hamburg, where unloading takes place without supervision by customs authorities.

7. Sailing books are returned to sailors, only after clearance by the STB. Sometimes this clearance is refused, which results in the sailor's transfer to another vessel operating within the borders of Czechoslovakia.

* Comment: Sometimes no captain is appointed to a vessel. In such cases, his functions are fulfilled by the helmsman.

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